

Conversational implicature in junior high school textbooks

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Abstract

Textbooks in EFL classroom play role as the material content provider. They often present formal and well-structured pattern of standardized English since texts, dialogues, and other aspects of content tend to be specially written to coorporate teaching points. This research is conducted to examine the content of textbooks, particularly the short conversations found in English textbooks used by the seventh and eighth grades of junior high school students in Palangka Raya based on pragmatics point of view. It observes whether the conversations found in junior high school textbooks may contain more examples of conversation following Grice's cooperative principle/maxim, or tend to have more examples conveying conversational implicatures on them. The result of the analysis shows that out of 33 data, there are 8 (24.2%) conversations which obey Grice's cooperative principle by applying one or more maxims, whereas the other 25 ones (75.8%) have implicatures embedded in the conversations with their various contextual meanings and different types of conversational implicatures. The discussion in this research article also deals with the result of the research and its relation to the EFL teaching learning context.

Keywords: Pragmatic Analysis, Cooperative Principle, Conversational Implicature, Maxim

INTRODUCTION

The everyday nature of human being to socialize, develop and sustain their relationship with each other is by conducting communication. Communication is defined as the process by which meaning is exchanged between individuals through a common system symbols, sign or behavior (Pearson and Nelson, 2003). It is a co-operative activity done consciously by two or more people in order to achieve their aims. In communication, a message or

meaning is transferred by a speaker or a writer and interpreted by a listener or a reader. To have an effective and successful communication, a listener or a reader should be able to analyze (understand and well-interpret) utterances delivered by a speaker or a writer than what the words or phrases in those utterances might mean by him/her (Yule, 1998). The analysis of the speaker/writer meaning is the domain of Pragmatics study. This kind of study also involves the interpretation of what the speaker/writer means in a particular context and how the context influences what is said; and explores how a great deal of what is unsaid is recognized as part of what is communicated (Yule, 1998).

One of many ways for human being to conduct communication is through conversation. Conversation is a casual and spontaneous talk sharing ideas, feeling, information, or experiences between two or more people. Good communication requires people to appropriately understand and create a particular linguistic forms at the communication speech events they are engaged (Muslimin, 2014). When people conducting conversation, it is assumed that they as speakers/writers or listeners/readers are generally cooperating with each other. The cooperation among them means that there is no effort to trick, confuse, mislead or withhold relevant information from each other. In most circumstances, this kind of cooperation is only the starting point for making sense of what is said (Yule, 1998:35). However, an additional conveyed meaning of what is said is often found in conversation. This additional conveyed meaning is called implicature. Implicatures are primary examples of more being communicated than is said, but in order for them to be well-interpreted, same basic cooperative principle must first be assumed to be in operation (Yule, 1998:36). This means that conversation works only with the cooperation of its participants; and cooperation is built based on the cooperative principle which is elaborated in four sub-principles called maxims; they are maxims of: (1) Quality, (2) Quantity, (3) Manner, and (4) Relevance (Grice, 1975).

Quality means when someone speaks to us, it is assumed that he/she says the truth not the false things; and what he/she says not lack of evidence. *Quantity* means when someone speaks to us, he/she gives the information as informative as is required and does not say more or purposefully holdback anything that is important that should be known by his/her listeners. *Manner* means when someone speaks to us, he/she tries to speak briefly and orderly, and avoids of doing obscurity and ambiguity. The last principle is *Relevance*; it means that when someone speaks to us, he/she tries to be relevant to the conversation where he/she is engaged. Thus in conversation, when someone

violates or flouts one or more principles/maxims as previously mentioned, he/she creates a conversational implicature.

A conversational implicature is a common phenomenon that often happens in people's lives and interaction when they use language. This phenomenon has drawn many researchers' interest in conducting their researches and analysis on it. Therefore, there have been several researches that have been previously conducted in the topic of interest of conversational implicature (Huda, 2013; Kurniawan, 2016; Lestari, 2013; Sian, 2007; Muvida, 2015; Vikry, 2014; Xiaosu, 2009; Yoenita & Winiharti, 2012). However the researches are mostly done on conversational implicature found in movies or films (Lestari, 2013; Muvida, 2015; Vikry, 2014; Xiaosu, 2009; Yoenita & Winiharti, 2012); in CNN interview script (Huda, 2013) or in comic strips (Sian, 2007); and there is only one research which analyzes conversational implicature in an English textbook (Kurniawan, 2016).

Kurniawan (2016) analyzes conversational implicature as found in one English textbook "When English Rings a Bell" published by Indonesian Ministry of National and Culture in 2014 for the eighth grade students of junior high school. Similar to Kurniawan's research (2016), the present research also analyzes conversational implicature in the textbook, but it differs in the number, level and type of the textbooks. There are five textbooks analyzed in the present research; two of them are used for the seventh grade students of junior high school and three books are for the eighth grade students. Those books are the companion books of the compulsory one (*When English Rings a Bell*, 2014) published by the Indonesian Ministry of National and Culture. The books are used by the seventh and eighth grades students of junior high schools in Palangka Raya.

The research on conversational implicature found in textbooks is deemed worth-conducting. It is not only for filling the gap in the study of conversational implicature found in textbooks which is most likely to be scarcely conducted, but also for giving contribution to improve on the existing knowledge of conversational implicature as applied in English textbooks used by junior high school students. As we know, the role of a textbook in the EFL teaching learning process is so important for teachers and students as well. Textbooks serve as primarily material supplement for teachers and students as they provide content to learn and language models for the class to practice. In this case, textbooks can serve as effective language model and input. In other words, textbooks can help and support teachers whose first language is not English. However in relation to the role of textbooks as the material content provider,

there is the negative impact through their content. They often present formal, well-structured pattern of standardized English and lack of authentic language examples since texts, dialogues and other aspects of content tend to be specially written to incorporate teaching points and are often not representative of real language use. In regard with the focus of the present research, the issue to be answered is whether the conversations found in the selected English textbooks analyzed may contain more examples of conversation following Grice's cooperative principle/maxim, or tend to have more examples of authentic language use containing various conversational implicatures on them. Thus to find the answers on the issue, the present research is still worth-conducting.

METHOD

The present research employs a descriptive qualitative research which focuses more on the analysis of texts in the form of short conversations found in English textbooks for the seventh and eighth grade students of junior high schools in Palangka Raya. The source of data used in the present study, as can be seen in Table 1, is five selected English textbooks for the seventh and eighth grades of junior high school students in Palangka Raya. Two textbooks are for the seventh grade students; the other three books are for grade eight students. While the data of the present research are in the form of short conversation found in each language function of every unit of the textbooks.

Table 1. Textbooks Used as the Source of Data

No	Title of Textbook/Code				Publisher/Year	Grade	
1	Buku	PR	Bahasa	Inggris	PT. IntanPariwara/2016	Seventh, Semester	1 st
	K13/A1						
2	KANCAH/A2				MGMP InggrisM.Ts Palangka Raya/2016	Bahasa Kota	Seventh
3	PR Bahasa Inggris KTSP/B1				PT. IntanPariwara/2015	Eighth, 1 st Semester	
4	Buku	PR	Bahasa	Inggris	PT. IntanPariwara/2017	Eighth, 1 st Semester	
	K13/B2						
5	Buku	PR	Bahasa	Inggris	PT. IntanPariwara/2014	Eighth, Semester	2 nd
	K13/B3						

The data collecting process is started by selecting short conversations found in each unit of the textbooks used as the source of data. The short conversation is selected based on the language function it has as stated in each unit of the textbooks and then coded based on the number of data, the code of

the textbook, the number of unit in the textbook, and the page where the data are found in the textbook.

To provide answers to the objectives of the research, the selected and coded data then are analyzed using a number of steps. The first step is examining the short conversation by identifying the types of cooperative principle or conversational implicature found in that conversation based on Grice's theory of cooperative principle and conversational implicature. After all conversations are examined and the types of cooperative principle or conversational implicature are identified, the second step is to put the result of the examination and identification into a table. Subsequently, each frequency of occurrence of cooperative principle or conversational implicature in the conversations is calculated to observe which one is more dominant than the other. The third step is describing the contextual meaning of the implicatures found in the conversation; and the last step is discussing and drawing the conclusion.

Analysis and Data Display

There are 33 data of short conversations obtained from the textbooks consisting of eleven data from **A1**; six data from **A2**; five data from **B1**; eight data from **B2**; and three data from **B3**.

Out of 33 data, there are 8 data (24.2%) that follow Grice's cooperative principle by applying one or more maxims; whereas the other 25 ones (75.8%) have implicatures embedded in the conversations with their various contextual meanings and different types of conversational implicatures. The result of data identification and analysis with each of its frequency of occurrence is presented in Table 2.

Table 2. The Occurrence of Cooperative Principle and Conversational Implicature Employed in Short Conversations of the Textbooks

No	Types of Conversation	Number of Data	Percentage
1	Cooperative Principles	002, 004, 011, 014, 019, 022, 024, 031	8 (24.2%)
2	Conversational Implicature	001, 003, 005, 006, 007, 008, 009, 010, 012, 013, 015, 016, 017, 018, 020, 021, 023, 025, 026, 027, 028, 029, 030, 032, 033	25 (75.8%)
Total Number of Data			33 (100%)

The eight data or 24.2% out of 33 data that follow Grice's cooperative principle apply more than one maxim in their conversations. The clear

description of the types of maxims applied in this category is presented in Table 3.

Table 3. Grice's Cooperative Principle Employed in Short Conversations of the Textbooks

No	DATA	Maxim of Quality	Maxim of Quantity	Maxim of Relevance	Maxim of Manner
1	002/A1/U1/p.6	√	√	–	√
2	004/A1/U2/p.28	–	√	–	√
3	011/A2/U1/p.7	√	√	–	–
4	014/A2/U1/p.12	–	–	–	√
5	019/A3/U5/p.106	–	√	–	√
6	022/A3/U5/p.121	–	–	√	√
7	024/A3/U6/p.135	√	√	√	√
8	031/B2/U1/p.8	√	√	√	–

Table 3 shows us there are one datum (014) that obeys only one maxim of cooperative principle and one datum (024) that follows all maxims of cooperative principle. Two data (002 and 031) follow three maxims in their conversation, while four data (004, 011, 019, and 022) obey two maxims of Grice's cooperative principle.

Further analysis on implicatures in the conversations of the textbooks reveals there are 25 or 75.8% out of 33 data that have implicatures. The data in this category then analyzed and classified based on the types of implicatures found in the conversations. The types of implicatures are the generalized conversational implicature and the particularized conversational implicature. The result of implicature classification can be seen in Table 4.

Table 4. The Types of Conversational Implicature in Short Conversations of the Textbooks

No	Types of Conversational Implicature	Number of Data	Percentage
1	Generalized Implicature	003, 012, 018, 021, 029	5 (20%)
2	Particularized Implicature	001, 005, 006, 007, 008, 009, 010, 013, 015, 016, 017, 020, 023, 025, 026, 027, 028, 030, 032, 033	20 (80%)
Total Number of Data			25 (100%)

Table 4 shows that there are five or 20% data classified into the generalized conversational implicature and 20 or 80 % data classified into the particularized conversational implicature. In generalized conversational implicature, no special background knowledge of the context of the utterance is required in order to make the necessary inference. While in particularized conversational implicature, the hearer is required to work out the conveyed meaning by assuming the locally recognized inference. Thus from the result of the analysis on the conversations of the textbooks, it can be seen that particularized conversational implicature tend to be more dominant than the generalized conversational implicature.

The analysis on the contextual meaning of implicatures conveyed in short conversations of textbooks shows that there are thirteen contextual meaning identified. Most of the data convey one contextual meaning in their conversations, however there are also several implicatures that have more than one contextual meaning. The result of the contextual meaning analysis is presented in Table 5.

Table 5. The Contextual Meaning towards Implicature Data

No	Contextual Meaning	Conveyed by Data Number
1	Cautioning	001, 017, 030
2	Convincing	003, 020, 023, 029
3	Offering	005, 018, 020, 033
4	Denying	006, 015, 029
5	Good Manners	007, 012, 013
6	Protesting	008
7	Worrying	009, 015
8	Informing	010, 032
9	Admitting	016, 023, 029, 033
10	Appreciating	018
11	Accepting	021, 025
12	Promising	026
13	Refusing	027, 028

Table 5 shows us the various contextual meanings conveyed by the implicatures of the conversations in textbooks which reflect different kinds of language functions.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Referring to the results of the analysis above, it is apparent that the conversations in textbooks being analyzed in this research have more examples of conversational implicatures conveying various contextual meanings (75.8%) than those that follow Grice's Cooperative Principles (24.2%). The findings of this research is not in line with the findings of Kurniawan's (2016) in which in his research he stated that 73% dialogues he analyzed fulfill Grice's Cooperative Principles and only 27 % of them that have implicatures. According to Kurniawan (2016), his findings shows the ability of the book's author to provide such representative dialogs pragmatically in the case that the interlocutors are able to observe maxims in delivering the information, such as being truthful (the maxim of quality) and informative (the maxim of quantity), being relevant to the topic of speaking (the maxim of relation), and being clear and orderly (the maxim of manner). This means that the textbook he analyzed presents more formal and well-structured pattern of standardized English supported by texts, dialogues, and other aspects of content that tend to be specially written to incorporate the teaching points. He added that there was no dialogue that violates the Grice's Cooperative Principle maxims. The conversational implicatures found are majorly due to flout of the maxims, such as the quantity or the manner maxim with 17%, where proximity is the most common to exploit followed by the quality and relation maxim with 6% and 4% respectively.

While on the contrary, the findings of this research show more examples of implicatures found in conversations of the textbooks (25 out of 33 data or 75.8%). The implicatures found consist of 5 or 20 % of generalized conversational implicatures and 20 or 80 % of particularized conversational implicatures with various contextual meanings embedded on them. In generalized conversational implicature, no special background knowledge of the context of the utterance is required in order to make the necessary inference. The example of it can be seen in the following conversation (003/A1/U1/p.8)

Denias	:	Hi, Mila
Mila	:	Hi, Denias.
Denias	:	How are you?
Mila	:	I'm fine, thanks, and you?
Denias	:	I'm not feeling well.
Mila	:	What's the matter with you?
Denias	:	I have a backache.
Mila	:	Have you seen the doctor?
Denias	:	No, I haven't. I think I need a rest.

Mila	:	Yeah, perhaps, you are too tired after gardening
Denias	:	I guess so.

In this example, the implicature is on Denias' utterance "*No, I haven't. I think I need a rest*" which seems to flout the maxim of quality. From Denias' utterance, Mila may infer an assumption that Denias must feel *too tired* after gardening (it can be seen on Mila's response). The implicature is Denias tries to convince Mila that he is not feeling well not because he has a serious illness but only feels very tired after did gardening. The expression *a rest* might mean that Denias has to stop doing something that makes him tired; it does not mean to go to sleep. Thus, because there is no special knowledge required in the context of Denias' expression, this implicature can be included into generalized conversational implicature.

Concerning the particularized conversational implicature, the hearer is required to work out the conveyed meaning by assuming the locally recognized inference. The example of this type of implicature can be seen in the following conversation (001/A1/U1/p.5):

Noval	:	Good evening, Dad.
Mr. Toni	:	Good evening, dear. I feel tired. I want to take a bath and have dinner.
Noval	:	I will help mom prepare your dinner
Mr. Toni	:	Thanks

In this example, the local context is found on Mr.Toni's relevant response to Noval's greeting which indicates that he does not want to have further conversation with his son, and he does not want to be bothered as he came home feeling tired and wanted to have relaxed as soon as possible. Noval seems to flout his response to Mr. Toni's local context by saying "*I will help mom prepare your dinner*" which indicates that Noval could work out on the inferred meaning delivered by his father. This kind of implicature can be included into particularized conversational implicature.

Having a closer look at the examples of implicatures found in the conversations of the textbooks, it is noticed that most of the local context of the conversation is still affected by local culture or in another word, it is written in English while using Indonesian style. In Kadarisman's (2015:189) terms, this means that the textbooks' authors write in English but occasionally think in Indonesian. The example of this case can be seen in the following conversation (015/A2/U1/p.12):

Abdul	:	Abbi, are you sick? Your answer is not complete.
Abbi	:	No, I'm ok. I'm so sorry.
Abdul	:	That's ok. Please check it.
Abbi	:	Thanks. I must concentrate.

This particularized conversational implicature shows the common local context of "*are you sick*" used by Indonesian to know what is happening to someone. This direct question seems impolite and annoying to be asked to English native speakers. To replace it, the expressions of "*Are you okay?*" or "*What happens*" are more natural and acceptable for native speakers.

One more important note is that the local context of the conversation should be structurally error-free. The term "structurally error-free" means the accuracy in language use based on the correct grammar, appropriate vocabulary and also right pronunciation (Kadarisman, 2015). However, there are still several grammatical errors and inappropriate vocabularies found in the conversations of the textbooks as can be seen in the following example of conversation (016/A2/U2/p.30):

Bonza	:	Are you O.K today Weny?
Weny	:	I am O.K. It is everything fine.
Bonza	:	Hopely, you are happy with your condition whole a day.

The grammatical error is found in "*It is everything fine*" that should be revised into "*Everything is fine*". The expression of "*Hopely, you are happy with your condition whole a day*" seems not correct, inappropriate and unacceptable for English native speakers. The word "hopely" does not exist in English; it should be "hopefully". However if the author of this conversation wants to show how to conclude a conversation or to end a message by hoping the person to whom it is addressed experiences a pleasant day, the common expression for it is by saying "Have a nice day" or "Have a good day".

CONCLUSION

To sum up, the conversations of textbooks being analyzed in this research (33 conversations) have more examples of implicatures (25 or 75.8%) than those which fulfill Grice's Cooperative Principle (8 or 24.2%). The implicatures found consist of five or 20 % of generalized conversational implicatures and 20 or 80% of particularized conversational implicatures which convey various contextual meanings that reflect different types of language use.

This means that the textbooks present more various language uses such as the expressions of convincing, offering, cautioning, denying, accepting, appreciating, etc that can be used and practiced by the students/learners in real life situation. However, the local context of conversations in the textbooks is still culturally bound to Indonesian style and not structurally error-free. The conversations of textbooks lack of accuracy as there are still found many grammatical errors, inappropriate vocabularies and unacceptable style and language function on them.

Referring to the conclusion stated previously, suggestions are proposed. For the authors or publishers of the textbooks, as suggested by Kadarisman (2015:194), they should take three considerations of cognitive, structural, and cultural in developing ELT materials to be used by students or EFL learners. Cognitively, ELT textbooks are absolutely needed to help EFL learners' transitional L2 competence to fully develop into so-called multilingual or near-native competence. Structurally, ELT textbooks are supposed to be error-free, covering all linguistic levels: phonological, morpho-lexical, grammatical, and discourse levels which are needed by EFL learners to accomplish accuracy in pronunciation, grammar, and diction; and acceptability in style and language functions. Culturally, ELT textbooks should be designed with sensitivity to verbal conventions in English, so as to help EFL learners stay away from doing negative transfer in pragmatic or sociolinguistic domain, which can be annoying, shocking, or even offensive to native speakers.

Last but not least, for EFL teachers, it is necessary for them to be more critical and professional in choosing, selecting, and using the textbooks as the primary input for their students in their teaching learning context. In line with the focus of this research, EFL teachers are expected to be able to introduce their students with pragmatic competence and awareness by providing them with the appropriate examples of conversations that fulfill Grice's Cooperative Principle and/or implicatures that are acceptable and used by native speakers in real life situation.

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